

The punchline: Turkey is not alone in the belief that the YPG is a terrorist organization. It's not accurate to simply say that "Ankara regards" the YPG as a terrorist threat. These documents demonstrate YPG's terrorist actions, and show that the US – Congress, our intelligence agencies, top officials and think tank experts — agree.

Warmly,

Dan

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The *Worldwide Threat Assessment*, an annual report released by the US Director of National Intelligence, said earlier this year that YPG is the Syrian "militia" of the PKK. – [Worldwide Threat Assessment](#), 2019

Former Defense Secretary Ash Carter confirmed in testimony before Congress in April 2016 that YPG is substantially tied to the PKK, which "is a terrorist organization not only in the eyes of the Turkish Government, but in the eyes of the U.S. Government as well." – [Senate Armed Services Committee Hearing](#), 2016

The PKK and YPG revere the same terrorist leader, draw from the same ranks—they are the same. In an interview with the *Wall Street Journal*, a YPG fighter said, "It's all PKK but different branches. Sometimes I'm a PKK, sometimes I'm a PJAK, sometimes I'm a YPG. It doesn't really matter. They are all members of the PKK." – [America's Marxist Allies Against ISIS](#), 2015

Both the U.S. State Department and Human Rights Watch have documented the group's recruiting of child soldiers as young as 12 for years. – [State Dept. Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#), 2019 and [Human Rights Watch](#), 2018

The PKK has killed more Turkish citizens than the number of Westerners killed by ISIS and Al Qaeda combined, and poses an ongoing threat to Turkey's southern border – [link to study](#), 2017

**What Experts Are Saying:**

“This Kurdish militia is the Syrian branch of the PKK, which is a terrorist group that has waged a decades-long insurgency against Turkey.” – [Jennifer Cafarella, Research Director, Institute for the Study of War](#)

“The policy of assisting a faction of Syrian Kurds, the YPG, to fight the Islamic State has been a ticking time bomb since it began under the Obama administration, in 2014. The short-term imperative to combat the militant group, which is also known as ISIS, created a strategic contradiction with foreseeable consequences that are now on painful display. Turkey, a NATO member, never accepted U.S. support for the group, which is directly linked to a terrorist organization that has long fought an insurgency against the Turkish state.” – [Amanda Sloat, Robert Bosch Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution](#)

“The YPG has substantial ties to the Kurdistan Workers’ Party, the PKK, as then-Defense Secretary Ash Carter testified before Congress in April 2016. Classified by the State Department as a terrorist organization, the PKK has been waging armed struggle against Turkey since 1984 at a cost of tens of thousands of lives, according to the Uppsala Conflict Data Program, a respected source on armed conflict.” – [Michael Doran, Senior Fellow, Hudson Institute & Michael Reynolds, Director of the Program in Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies, Princeton University](#)

“The YPG is a neo-Marxist group that serves as Syrian branch of the PKK (designated a terrorist group by US Govt).” – [Luke Coffey, Director, Douglas and Sarah Allison Center for Foreign Policy, Heritage Foundation](#)

“The YPG is unquestionably part of the PKK; it was founded by Ocalan’s brother and is core component of KCK transnational structure ... Pursuing a short-term objective knowing you’re sparking multiple long-term consequences is insanely

short-sighted.” – [Charles Lister, Senior Fellow and Director of the Countering Terrorism and Extremism Program, Middle East Institute](#)

“The Y.P.G. does not disguise its ideological affinity for Mr. Ocalan ... Even the visible leadership of the Y.P.G. is overwhelmingly composed of longstanding P.K.K. members. At the lower levels, too, the P.K.K. retains tight control through a parallel command network.” – [Kyle Orton, Former Research Fellow at the Henry Jackson Society](#)

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